

Rain Barrel Painting Instructions

Recommended steps to follow:

1. All rain barrels are shipped with a few layers of UV protection. Thoroughly clean the exterior surface of the barrel by wiping away excess dirt and grime with a clean rag soaked in a 1:1 mixture of vinegar and water. Some individuals claim that generic window surface cleaner works also.
2. Use a fine- to medium-grade sandpaper (220 grit or finer) to lightly “rough up” the surface which will help the paint adhere to the plastic barrel. Be sure to use sand paper that does not leave scratches.
3. Wipe the barrel again with a dry cloth to get rid of any fine plastic shavings. Cover the spigot and overflow valve with masking tape and complete all of your painting in a well-ventilated area.
4. The barrel must be primed so that the paint adheres properly to the surface. Krylon Fusion spray paint or RustOleum Spray Paint for Plastic both make a spray primer that are great for a base coat (primer). Allow the primer to dry according to the directions on the container. Flat or semi-gloss acrylic paint, Krylon Fusion and RustOleum products can usually be found in local hardware and craft stores.
5. The barrel can be painted any way you like with ordinary flat or semi-gloss acrylic paint (spray or liquid). The design is completely up to you. Some people use stencils, a pattern, or freehand with a brush. You can also finger paint the barrel.
 - a. For those of you only interested in painting the barrel a solid color, spray paint is perfect. You probably will be able to cover a rain barrel with one can of paint. These plastic barrels by nature need to be painted at a slower rate than most “standard” surfaces because of the surface tension characteristics of the polymer, as well as the waxy surface features. Allow the primer to dry according to the directions on the container.
 - b. If you are using spray paint, but you need to paint small details, spray some paint into a small cup, making a liquid puddle, then use a brush to apply the paint. Allow all the paint to dry completely.
6. Apply at least two coats of flat or satin polyurethane spray to help protect the painted barrel. Krylon Triple Thick Crystal Glaze or other polyurethane sprays or brush-on products can be used as long as they are plastic-appropriate. Be sure to allow the polyurethane to dry between coats.

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